



TACOMA-PIERCE COUNTY CHAMBER
P O W E R T H R O U G H
CONNECTIONS

July 17, 2002

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

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MAILROOM

RE: Qwest's 271 application for Washington State

Dear Secretary Dortch: WC DOCKET NO. 02-189

We are writing to encourage the Federal Communications Commission to approve Qwest Communications' application to provide long-distance service in Washington State.

The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC) has completed a lengthy and exhaustive process to determine if Qwest has fulfilled its statutory and regulatory requirements to open their local networks to competition prior to receiving FCC approval to re-enter the long-distance market. It is our understanding that the WUTC has concluded that all requirements of the "14-point checklist" have been successfully met, and that the WUTC is recommending to the FCC that Qwest's application for Washington be approved. The Chamber commends the WUTC for the thorough and rigorous process they undertook with all of the affected parties to reach this conclusion, and we support their recommendation.

The Chamber's primary interest in this process is economic development. We are constantly seeking opportunities to enhance economic growth in Tacoma and Pierce County, and we believe that access to advanced telecommunications services and technology is a critical component to our success. Businesses looking to locate or expand in our area must always consider the degree of access to advanced telecom services as a part of their decision-making process. With Qwest's entry into the marketplace, we believe that the increased access will be an asset.

We request that you give Washington a needed tool to help achieve our goal to grow our economy, provide new jobs, and sustain our rural and urban quality of life. Allowing Qwest to re-enter the long-distance market in Washington will stimulate more competition, resulting in more choices, better service and lower prices.

We urge you to expeditiously approve Qwest's application to offer long-distance service in Washington.

Respectfully,

David W. Graybill
President and CEO
Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber